

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 BIB-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2892

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL POZNAN

AMCONSUL KRAKOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OL, UR

SUBJECT: LITHUANIAN PARTY SECRETARY VISITS POLAND

1. TRYBUNA LUDU'S LEAD STORY ON JANUARY 9 WAS THE VISIT OF LITHUANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY FIRST SECRETARY PETRAS GRISHKY-AVICHYUS. ACCORDING TO THE STORY, GRISHKYAVICHYUS IS HERE WITH HIS WIFE AT GIEREK'S INVITATION.

2. THE STORY WAS HEADED BY A THREE-COLUMN PICTURE OF GIEREK RECEIVING GRISHKYAVICHYUS IN HIS OFFICE. ALSO PRESENT WERE THE DIRECTORS OF THE LITHUANIAN CP'S ORGANIZATIONAL AND FOREIGN DEPARTMENTS, W. OSTROWSKI AND F. STRUMILAS, THE DIRECTOR OF THE FOREIGN DEPARTMENT OF THE PZPR, RYSZARD FRELEK, SOVIET AMBASSADOR PILOTOWICZ, AND THE PZPR FIRST SECRETARY OF BIALYSTOK WOJEWODZTWO, ZDZISLAW KUROWSKI, AND AN INTER-PRETER. ACCORDING TO TRYBUNA LUDU, GIEREK AND GRISHKYAVICHYUS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH THE "DYNAMIC GROWTH" OF POLAND AND THE LITHUANIAN SSR, AS WELL AS THE FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF POLISH-SOVIET "BROTHERLY RELATIONS."

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THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETING WAS CHARACTERIZED AS WARM

AND FRIENDLY.

3. THE MEETING APPARENTLY CAME AT THE END OF GRISHKYAVICHYUS'S VISIT BECAUSE THE ARTICLE NOTED THAT HE HAD VISITED BIALYSTOK, KRAKOW, AND KATOWICE, AS WELL AS WARSAW. IN ALL FOUR PLACES HE MET WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE WOJEWODZTWO PARTY COMMITTEES AND FAMILIARIZED HIMSELF WITH ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL QUESTIONS AS WELL AS QUESTIONS OF PARTY WORK.

4. COMMENT: WHILE GIEREK WOULD PROBABLY RECEIVE THE VISITING FIRST SECRETARY OF ANY OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS, IT WOULD NORMALLY BE REPORTED AS A MINOR NEWS ITEM RATHER THAN THE LEADING FRONT-PAGE STORY IN TRYBUNA LUDU. WE THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT THE HIGHLIGHTING OF THE VISIT MEANS THAT SIGNIFICANT MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WERE INVOLVED. A MORE PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION IS THE CURRENT POPULAR INTEREST HERE IN THE FATE OF POLES LIVING IN THE SOVIET UNION. FOR CENTURIES ONE OF THE MAJOR POLISH CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CENTERS, WILNO TODAY SHARES HONORS WITH LWOW IN THE POPULAR POLISH NOSTALGIA FOR THE REGIONS LOST TO THE SOVIET UNION AS A RESULT OF WORLD WAR II. A SOVIET EMBOFF RECENTLY TOLD US THAT THERE WERE ALMOST 300,000 POLES STILL LIVING IN LITHUANIA. MANY POLES STILL HAVE RELATIVES THERE AND MANY HAVE TOLD US ABOUT VISITING LITHUANIA AND GOING TO "POLISH CHURCHES." THE POLISH REGIME PROBABLY HOPES THAT MANY POLES WILL SEE GIEREK'S INVITATION TO AND MEETING WITH GRISHKYAVICHYUS AS AN INDICATION THAT GIEREK IS REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF THE LITHUANIAN POLONIA. DAVIES

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